

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1, 3, and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese patent 62027902 (hereinafter "JP'902").

Claims 1, 3, and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over USPN 5,052,363 to *Stiles*.

Claims 1 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese patent 03-006363 (hereinafter "JP'362").

Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have canceled claims 1-2 without prejudice or disclaimer, amended claims 3, 5, and 8-9, and added new claims 10-12 to further define the invention. Accordingly, claims 3, 5, and 8-12 are presently pending.

The Objection to Claim 8

Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten claim 8 in independent form in accordance with the comments of the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claim 8 be withdrawn and passed on to allowance.

The Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 3, and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP'902. Claims 1, 3, and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Stiles*. Claims 1 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP'362. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections for at least the following reasons.

Applicants respectfully submit that rejection of claim 1 is moot in light of its cancellation. Dependent claims 3 and 5 now depend from rewritten independent claim 8 which is allowable. As such, the rejections of claims 3 and 5 are should be withdrawn. Therefore, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn because JP'902, *Stiles*, and JP'362, do not teach or suggest each feature of independent claim 8.

New Claims

Applicants respectfully request allowance of dependent claims 10-12, which depend from newly amended independent claim 8. The claims are allowable insofar as they recite the patentable combinations of features recited in their base claims, as well as reciting additional features that further distinguished over the applied prior art.

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments, claims 10-12 are allowable and pending for further consideration.

Conclusion

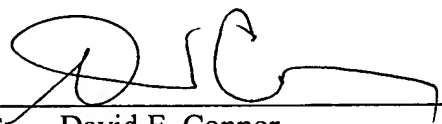
In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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